

A close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes in a diagonal pattern across the frame.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

HISTORY

CITY OF TORRANCE ANNUAL ARMED FORCES DAY

The City of Torrance is one of the few cities in the nation designated by the U.S. Department of Defense to host an Armed Forces Day celebration with the Torrance Armed Forces Day Parade as a highlight. The Parade has the distinction of being the nation's longest running military parade sponsored by any city.

2014 marks the 55th Annual City of Torrance Armed Forces Day Celebration, a continuation of Torrance's longest-standing tradition of celebrating the legacy and sacrifices of the United States Armed Forces.

This rich tradition began in 1960; Mayor Al Isen, with the help of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce, organized the first parade as a tribute to friends and fellow Americans who had served in the Armed Forces. The parade has grown over the years to become one of America's most eagerly awaited demonstrations of patriotism. The Armed Forces Day Parade has drawn up to 100,000 spectators a year to watch as many as 8,000 parade participants march along the parade route from downtown Torrance to City Hall.

In its early history, the celebration began on a Friday evening with a display of military exhibits coupled with a large fireworks show behind City Hall. On Saturday, a daylong display of military hardware and parade floats, all open for public viewing, follows the parade, which has a history of recognizing military war heroes, such as U.S. General Omar Bradley. A Five Star General of the Army, Omar N. Bradley served as the Honorary Grand Marshal in 1969, and was, at the time, the highest-ranking serviceman in the nation. General Bradley commanded the largest American military force ever to serve under one field commander; a force of more than 1,300,000 troops, during the European campaign in World War II.

The Torrance Armed Forces Day Parade is led by a prologue, which includes the Torrance Mounted Posse. Following the Mounted Posse, the Honorary Grand Marshal travels the parade route in his marked vehicle then takes his place in front of the reviewing stand as the Official Reviewing Officer for the parade.

The remainder of the prologue consists of senior commanders of major military installations, Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, State-elected officials, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Torrance and other city and county officials. Community leaders from the Torrance Chamber of Commerce and Torrance Jaycees and local high school marching bands complete the prologue section.

Following the prologue in the march are several Divisions, comprised mostly of military color guards, military marching bands, high school marching bands, uniformed troops, military drill teams, units from the National Guard, ROTC and military reserve, military vehicles such as tanks and armored personnel carriers, aerospace satellites and exhibits. When weather permits, military aircraft conduct flyovers of the parade route.

For over 50 years, the City of Torrance has faithfully supported the Armed Forces Day Parade despite periodic anti-war sentiments and economic hard times. In 1979, the parade was almost cancelled due to lack of funds brought about by the passage of Proposition 13 in California. However, the public outcry over canceling the event brought the community together and revived the parade, with the assistance of the Torrance Exchange Club. The Torrance Exchange Club raised funds from the community to allow the celebration to continue. In 2011, this Southern California tradition will be enjoyed once again by the community.

Many of the spectators who first viewed the parade as children in the 1960s and 1970s now bring their own children and grandchildren to the weekend's events. This experience helps instill a respect for country and demonstrates appreciation for the sacrifices the men and women of the armed forces have made to secure our freedoms.

GRAND MARSHAL



REAR ADMIRAL

PATRICK J. LORGE

COMMANDER, NAVY REGION SOUTHWEST

Rear Adm. Lorge, a native of Turnersville, N.J., graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1981. He completed flight training in April 1983 and remained as a flight instructor in VT-26. After initial F-14 instruction in VF-101, he was ordered to VF-143, deploying to the Mediterranean aboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69).

In October 1988, he reported to VF-43, the East Coast Adversary Squadron, where he flew the A-4, F-5 and F-16. From October 1991 to April 1994, as quality assurance officer and maintenance officer of VF-14, he deployed again to the Mediterranean aboard USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67).

Lorge was then selected as the maintenance officer for VF-101, the F-14 Fleet Replacement Squadron. In November 1997, he assumed command of VFA-25 and deployed with CVW-14 aboard USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) and USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) to the Persian Gulf in support of Operation Southern Watch. Following command, he reported to USS Nimitz (CVN 68) as operations officer and Ship's Force work package manager during the Refueling Complex Overhaul.

Lorge served in the joint operations directorate, Central Command Branch, Joint Staff, Washington, from April 2001 until July 2003. He served as executive assistant to the Assistant to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff until March 2004. Reporting to Naval Air Station Oceana, Va., as executive officer, he assumed command in November 2005. Subsequently, he reported to U.S. Naval Forces Central Command as chief of staff in November 2007. Lorge was the 87th commandant of Naval District Washington in July 2008.

His awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit with Gold Star, Meritorious Service Medal with two Gold Stars, two Strike Flight Air Medals, Joint Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and various unit awards.

HONORARY GRAND MARSHAL

PATRICK C. G. COULTER



Mr. Coulter recently retired after over 52 years in the Aerospace/Defense industry which included almost 25 years of active service in the Marine Corps.

Pat is a Vietnam veteran who rose from the rank of Private and retired as a Major of Marines. During the course of his Marine Corps career, he served as the press aide to the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Director of the Marine Corps Public Affairs Office in Los Angeles. In that latter assignment he served as the Technical Advisor for several major motion pictures such as "The Great Santini," "An Officer and a Gentleman," "The Killing Fields," "Top Gun," "Firefox," and many others.

His association with the Torrance Armed Forces Parade began in 1973 with his being invited to fill in as the Parade Announcer at the last minute. He was later invited to fill in for the late Johnny Grant who had been the Master of Ceremonies for the Annual Awards Banquet. He had continued in both roles and last year marked his 41st year of service to the citizens of Torrance and the military men and women who proudly participate in this annual salute to our nation's Armed Forces.

Outside of the Torrance Armed Forces Day Parade and Celebration, Pat also serves as the Master of Ceremonies for dozens of other Marine, Navy, Air Force, Army and community/national fundraisers, parades and patriotic events around the country which support our men and women in uniform and their families as well as philanthropic organizations which also support those in most need.

Pat has served as a senior communications executive with Boeing, Gulfstream and Raytheon from which he retired. He is an ordained Permanent Deacon in the Catholic Church and is currently a Chaplain for the Ventura County Sheriff's and Fire Departments. He is completing work on a second Master's degree, this one in Theology and also holds a Master's degree in Political Journalism from the University of Southern California.

Mr. Coulter and his wife, Jerie, reside in Moorpark, California. They have three adult children and six grandchildren.

CONCERT BAND

NAVY BAND SOUTHWEST



Navy Band Southwest is one of the Navy's finest and oldest continuing musical organizations. Now with over 80 years of support to the San Diego community, the band serves as the musical ambassador for the Commander, Navy Region Southwest. Under the direction of Lieutenant Diane E. Nichols, the band is located onboard Naval Base San Diego, and serves the military and civilian communities throughout the Southwestern United States.

The 35-member organization calls upon its Ceremonial Band for the majority of its work. The band's other performing ensembles include the Wind Ensemble, SeaBreeze, the band's reception combo, Brass and Woodwind Quintets, and the contemporary entertainment ensemble the Destroyers.

Navy Band Southwest averages over 600 performances a year. In addition to the many military activities it supports, the band's majority of performances are in support of the Navy's retention and recruiting initiatives. It also performs for many different community concert series and professional sporting events, including regular performances with the San Diego Symphony Summer Pops. As a strong proponent of music education, Navy Band Southwest proudly participates in the Navy's "Partnership in Education" program through educational concerts and clinics for school music programs.

Navy Band Southwest is a particularly important part of San Diego's military heritage. Originating in 1923, Navy Band Southwest takes pride in upholding its rich tradition and promoting the pride and professionalism of today's United States Navy.



MEDIA ACCESS

CITY OF TORRANCE

55th Annual Armed Forces Day Celebration

MEDIA ACCESS

Members of the press must have an official press pass to gain access to the event sites and personnel.

The City of Torrance Public Information Team will work closely with members of the media who are interested in covering the celebration. We will make every effort to fulfill your needs.

Media representatives should contact:
Sergeant Robert Watt at 310-618-5688 or contact

Jamie Le at the Office of Cable and Community Relations at 310-618-5762
for further information.

During the celebration, media access includes:
Monday, May 12 through Saturday, May 17, 2014

Access to parade planners from the Torrance Police Department, Traffic Division regarding planning activities related to the parade.

Access to senior members of the Command Staff of the Torrance Police Department for statements regarding the role of the parade in the City and Police Department.

Friday, May 16, 2014
Day Prior to Parade Day
Up-close access to military hardware static displays beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, May 17, 2014
Parade Day
Media van parking available near reviewing stand
(parking lot in front of City of Torrance Personnel Office, 3231 Torrance Boulevard)

Access to Media Information Center for press statements by the Public Information Officer.
Team Access to Marshaling Area where media may have access to military equipment and other parade entries.



EVENTS LIST

DATES, TIMES & ACTIVITIES

FRIDAY, MAY 16

CONCERT: 1:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

On May 16th at 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. the Navy Band Southwest will perform for FREE at the James Armstrong Theatre, 3330 Civic Center Drive. For tickets, contact the Box Office: 310-781-7171. The tickets are free and are on a first come, first served basis. There is a limit of four (4) tickets per adult. Ticket holders must be in their seats 15 minutes prior to show time or the seat will be made available to other patrons. Tickets are available at the box office on Wednesday, May 14, 2014 at 10:00 a.m.

MILITARY EXHIBITS: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Military exhibits will be on display, including aircrafts, vehicles, and support equipment at the Del Amo Fashion Center. The outdoor exhibits will be located at Mall 11 near Macy's (south of Carson Street, east of Hawthorne Blvd.).

SATURDAY, MAY 17

PARADE: 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

The 55th Annual Armed Forces Day Parade begins at Crenshaw Boulevard traveling west on Torrance Boulevard and ending at Madrona Avenue. All streets intersecting the parade route will be closed the majority of the day. Torrance's parade is the longest-running Armed Forces Day Parade in the nation. As one of few cities designated by the Department of Defense, the City of Torrance is proud to honor the men and women of our nation's Armed Forces. This year's honored branch is the United States Navy

The Navy will be led by Grand Marshal, Rear Admiral Patrick J. Lorge, Commander, Navy Region Southwest and Honorary Grand Marshal Pat Coulter, long-time Torrance Armed Forces Day Parade Announcer.

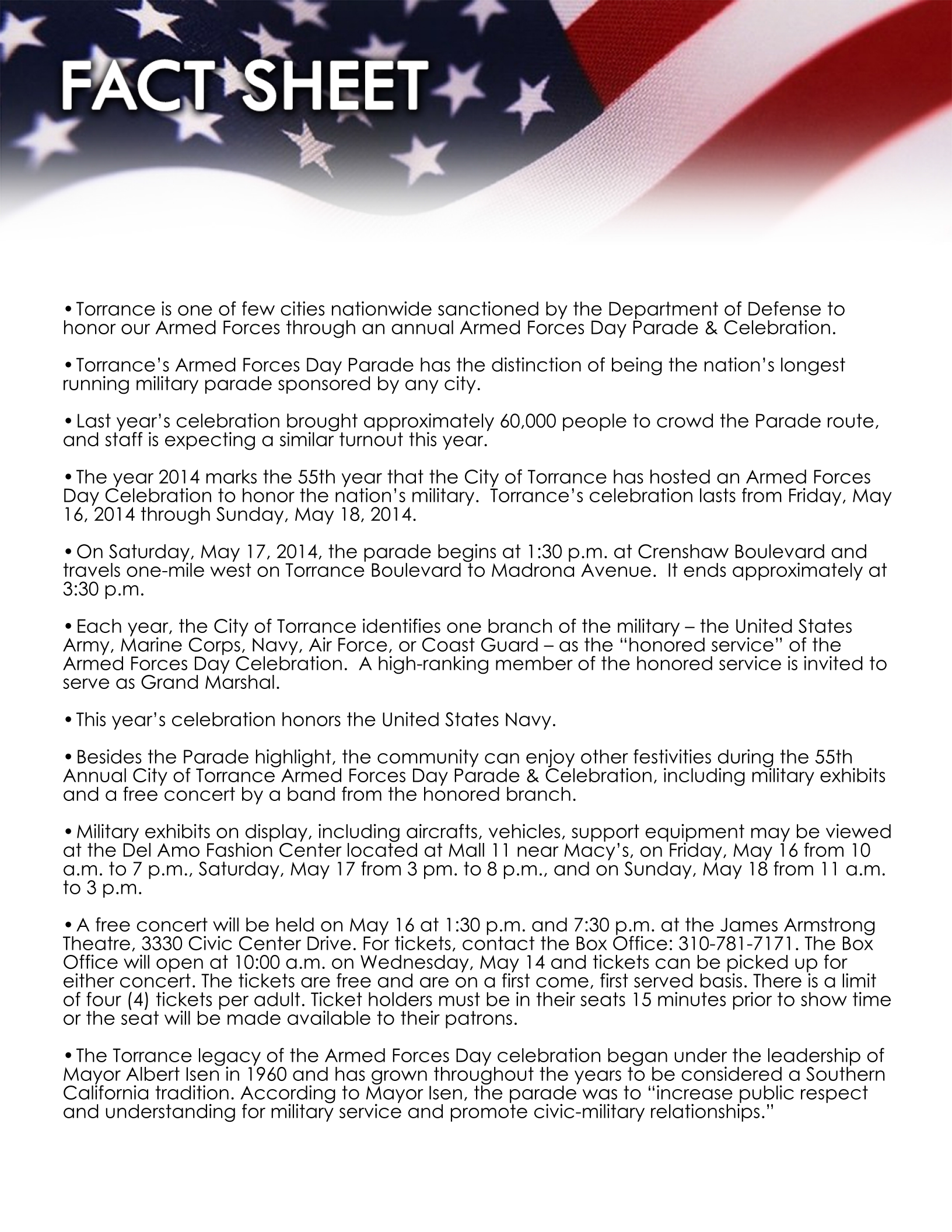
MILITARY EXHIBITS: 3 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Military exhibits will be on display, including aircrafts, vehicles, and support equipment at the Del Amo Fashion Center. The outdoor exhibits will be located at Mall 11 near Macy's (south of Carson Street, east of Hawthorne Blvd.).

SUNDAY, MAY 18

MILITARY EXHIBITS: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Military exhibits will be on display, including aircrafts, vehicles, and support equipment at the Del Amo Fashion Center. The outdoor exhibits will be located at Mall 11 near Macy's (south of Carson Street, east of Hawthorne Blvd.).



FACT SHEET

- Torrance is one of few cities nationwide sanctioned by the Department of Defense to honor our Armed Forces through an annual Armed Forces Day Parade & Celebration.
- Torrance's Armed Forces Day Parade has the distinction of being the nation's longest running military parade sponsored by any city.
- Last year's celebration brought approximately 60,000 people to crowd the Parade route, and staff is expecting a similar turnout this year.
- The year 2014 marks the 55th year that the City of Torrance has hosted an Armed Forces Day Celebration to honor the nation's military. Torrance's celebration lasts from Friday, May 16, 2014 through Sunday, May 18, 2014.
- On Saturday, May 17, 2014, the parade begins at 1:30 p.m. at Crenshaw Boulevard and travels one-mile west on Torrance Boulevard to Madrona Avenue. It ends approximately at 3:30 p.m.
- Each year, the City of Torrance identifies one branch of the military – the United States Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, or Coast Guard – as the “honored service” of the Armed Forces Day Celebration. A high-ranking member of the honored service is invited to serve as Grand Marshal.
- This year's celebration honors the United States Navy.
- Besides the Parade highlight, the community can enjoy other festivities during the 55th Annual City of Torrance Armed Forces Day Parade & Celebration, including military exhibits and a free concert by a band from the honored branch.
- Military exhibits on display, including aircrafts, vehicles, support equipment may be viewed at the Del Amo Fashion Center located at Mall 11 near Macy's, on Friday, May 16 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday, May 17 from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m., and on Sunday, May 18 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- A free concert will be held on May 16 at 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the James Armstrong Theatre, 3330 Civic Center Drive. For tickets, contact the Box Office: 310-781-7171. The Box Office will open at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 14 and tickets can be picked up for either concert. The tickets are free and are on a first come, first served basis. There is a limit of four (4) tickets per adult. Ticket holders must be in their seats 15 minutes prior to show time or the seat will be made available to their patrons.
- The Torrance legacy of the Armed Forces Day celebration began under the leadership of Mayor Albert Isen in 1960 and has grown throughout the years to be considered a Southern California tradition. According to Mayor Isen, the parade was to “increase public respect and understanding for military service and promote civic-military relationships.”